Centre for Medieval Studies

Newsletter

Vol. 5 No. 1 - University of Sydney - February 2002

General Information

The Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Sydney was founded in 1997 and begins the sixth year of its successful operation in 2002. This Newsletter is circulated to all Members, Honorary, Associate and Student Members either electronically or in hard copy, depending on whether members have given us their e-mail addresses. The newsletter appears biannually, in February and July, and includes a programme of events for the coming semester as well as news of Centre activities and the research projects and publications of its members.

The Editors welcome news items and contributions from members. Please send them, preferably electronically, to the Centre at the address on the final page of this number.

Annual General Meeting

At the December 2001 Annual General Meeting (minutes of which may be read on our website) the following were elected or re-elected to hold office as member of the CMS Board for 2002:

**Director:** Margaret Clunies Ross (English)

**Associate Directors:** Geraldine Barnes (English) and John Pryor (History)

**Board Members:** John Clifton-Everest (Germanic Studies, Semester 1); Rif Ebied (Semitic Studies); Helen Fulton (English and Celtic Studies); Antonina Harbus (English); Jane Hardie (Hon. Research Associate); Andrew Gillett (Ancient History,
Macquarie); John Ward (History, Semester 2)

**Undergraduate Student Member** (until Semester 1/02): Leonard Cox

**Postgraduate Student Members:** Peter Hupfauf (Medieval Studies); Kim Selling (Medieval Studies)

Catherine Cowan continues to be our Honorary Administration Manager. Catherine can be reached by email at <catherine.cowan@english.usyd.edu.au>

**Centre Visiting Scholar, Semester 1 2002**

Professor Christopher Given-Wilson, of the Department of Mediaeval History at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, will be the Centre’s Semester 1 visiting scholar and Honorary Research Associate. Professor Given-Wilson, a distinguished medieval historian, will be visiting Sydney in the period 12 February - 30 April 2002. He has agreed to give one of the Centre’s monthly lectures, on 14 March, on the subject of ‘The Writing of History in Late Medieval England’ (see further below).


Visits by other medievalists are currently in the planning stage and will be notified to members as soon as they have been finalised.

**Centre for Medieval Studies Lecture Series Semester 1 2002**

The Centre aims to present monthly lectures by local medievalists and visiting scholars on a variety of topics in Medieval Studies. All members and their guests are welcome at these lectures, which are free and delivered by experts in a manner accessible to non-specialists as well as to specialist medievalists.

So far we have held all evening lectures in the Sir Herman Black Room at the former University of Sydney Club. The Club was closed down by the University, however, in December 2001, and we will hold all 2002 evening lectures in the Staff Common Room (Room N480), Level 4, John Woolley Building, A20, University of Sydney. This common room has a kitchen attached, and we intend to provide drinks and nibbles before each lecture.

We normally take the speaker out to dinner after the lecture, and members are cordially invited to come along, but please let Catherine Cowan know beforehand, preferably by email.

The following are the lectures for Semester 1 (please note that the first two are not on our normal last Thursday of the month dates, as our visiting speakers are not available
then). All lectures will take place in the Staff Common Room, N480, Level 4, John Woolley Building:

**Thursday 14 March: 5.30-7 pm. Professor Christopher Given-Wilson, University of St. Andrews, ‘The Writing of History in late medieval England’**.

**Thursday 11 April: 5.30-7pm. Professor Jean-Michel Mehl, Department of Medieval History, Université Marc-Bloch de Strasbourg, ‘Popular games in medieval France’**.

**Thursday 13 June: 5.30-7pm. Dr. Tarrin Wills, Research Associate, Skaldic Editing Project, Department of English and Centre for Medieval Studies, ‘A Brief History of Runology’**.

Extra lectures may be scheduled if visitors make themselves available after this *Newsletter* has gone to press. These will be notified to members separately, either by email or through the post. There is no lecture in the month of June, which coincides with the mid-year break between semesters. The lecture series will resume in late July, and details will be announced in the July edition of this *Newsletter*.

**Undergraduate teaching programme 2002**

As in previous years, Medieval Studies 2001, *The Written Tradition of the Middle Ages* (8 credit points), will be taught in Semester 1, 2002, coordinated by John Pryor. Nearly 30 students are enrolled so far. In Semester 2, numbers permitting, we will offer a second 8-credit point unit of study, Medieval Studies 2007, *Medieval Literary and Artistic Modes*. This will be coordinated by Margaret Clunies Ross. An earlier version of this unit was offered for 4 credit points in 1999.

**Medieval Studies research postgraduates**

Currently there are 6 postgraduate research students enrolled in Medieval Studies, all undertaking PhDs, including one student currently suspended. The number of postgraduate research students attached to the Centre has grown slowly since our inception in 1997, and at present comprises 4 in their second, third or fourth years (Deslee Campbell, David Duchesne, Peter Hupfauf and Kim Selling) and 2 new research students in 2002, Melanie Heyworth (who obtained Honours 1 in Medieval Studies in 2001) and Matthew Sayles. All but 2 of our postgraduates hold research scholarships, either Australian Postgraduate Awards or University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards.

**Making the Middle Ages**

Two new volumes in the Centre’s *Making the Middle Ages* series, published by Brepols in Belgium, will shortly make their appearance. These will be (in order of appearance) Volume 4, *The Old Norse Poetic Translations of Thomas Percy*, by Margaret Clunies Ross (2001, published March 2002), and Volume 3, *Chaucer and the Discourse of German Philology*, by Richard Utz of the University of Northern Iowa (2002).

Volumes 5 and 6 of our original series are well underway, and the General Editors,
Geraldine Barnes and Margaret Clunies Ross, have several more volumes in prospect. The editorial team, with the expert help of Simon French as editorial assistant and Peter Hupfauf as cover designer, is working very well to produce these volumes in a timely fashion, thanks to a small editorial subsidy from Brepols.

Publications in the series may be ordered direct from the publishers, Brepols Publishers, Steenweg op Tielen 68, B-2300 Turnhout, Belgium, Fax +32-14-428919.

Conferences and Symposia 2002-3

The Centre will be associated with at least three conferences or workshops in 2002-3 as either the main or a subsidiary sponsor.

One-day Symposium: Fantastic Fictions: Medieval and Modern

The Centre is sponsoring a one-day Symposium on Fantastic Fictions: Medieval and Modern on Friday 27 September 2002. It will take place on the University of Sydney campus at a location to be announced. The Coordinators of the Workshop are postgraduate students Kim Selling (Medieval Studies) and Lilla Smee (English).

Given the huge wave of general interest in fantasy following the movie releases of Harry Potter and The Lord of the Rings, and the renewed interest in fantasy literature, it seems apposite to draw attention to the range of contemporary scholarly and critical work on the fantastic. There will be a focus on work conducted in Australia, and particularly within the University of Sydney by such people as Dr. Justine Larbalestier, a Research Fellow in the Department of English, and current PhD students Kim Selling, Lilla Smee and Amelia Lindley.

The Guest of Honour at the Workshop will be Dr. Brian Attebery, renowned US academic in the field of fantasy and science fiction, author of Strategies of Fantasy (1992), The Fantasy Tradition in American Literature from Irving to Le Guin (1980), and co-editor, with Ursula Le Guin, of the Norton Book of Science Fiction. It is hoped the symposium will provide an interdisciplinary forum for critical commentary and debate on a hitherto much neglected area of study, the fantastic in literature (medieval and contemporary), film, television, art and other media.

For further information, please contact Kim Selling, - kimselling@student.usyd.edu.au

Updated information and registration details will be provided in our next Newsletter in July 2002.

Workshop: The Logistics of Crusading and related Military Activities

The Centre is the principal sponsor of a week-long Workshop on The Logistics of Crusading and related Military Activities which will be held during the AVCC Common Week, 30 September - 4 October 2002. John Pryor, an expert on the workshop subject and an Associate Director of the Centre, will be its Coordinator, and the Proceedings of the workshop will be published as a book entitled How they made war in the Age of the Crusades. At present, 8 scholars from Canada, the United Kingdom,
the United States of America and Israel have agreed to join 2 from the University of Sydney for this event.

These participants will have previously posted synopses of their papers and rough drafts on the Centre’s website. The Workshop itself will take the form of ‘brain-storming’ sessions in which participants will address their topics for an hour, followed by an hour’s discussion of these topics by the group.

Participation is invited from other scholars, especially from Australia and New Zealand, who may be interested in joining the Workshop and being involved in the publication. It may be possible to provide some financial assistance.

Sessions of the Workshop will be open to Members of the Centre for Medieval Studies, students, and the general public on a cost-recovery basis. Postgraduate students, in particular, may be interested in attending to see how such a Workshop operates. Those wishing to attend may do so either by the day or for the whole week. Registration will, however, be closed some 10 days before the commencement of the Workshop so that catering and other arrangements may be put in place.

All enquiries should be directed to the Coordinator:

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   Email: john.pryor@history.usyd.edu.au

Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Early Modern Studies (ANZAMEMS) February 2003

ANZAMEMS’ next meeting will take place from 5-8 February 2003 at the University of Melbourne. ANZAMEMS is the most important Australasian conference in medieval and early modern studies. Dr Megan Cassidy-Welch (History, University of Melbourne, <anzamems-2003@unimelb.edu.au>) is the conference Coordinator.

The Centre is one of the sponsors of the conference and hopes to attract one or more of its guest speakers to visit the University of Sydney either before or after the event. Information about such visits will be supplied in the July issue of the Newsletter.
News of Centre Members

Research Profile — Dr. Tarrin Wills

Tarrin Wills graduated with Honours in English from the University of Sydney in 1996 and won the Helen B Devine Bequest Prize (for Anglo-Saxon / Old English studies). In 2001 Tarrin was awarded a PhD by the University of Sydney. In 1998 Tarrin was awarded the Kath O'Neil Scholarship and the H L Rogers Scholarship. In the same year he presented a paper, "Derrida and Medievalism: Iterability, Orality and Literacy' at the International Medieval Congress held by the University of Leeds. In 2000 his paper, 'The reception of myths concerning literacy and poetry' was presented at the International Saga Conference and in 2001, 'the rune chapters of the Third Grammatical Treatise and post-medieval interpretations' at the International Medieval Congress also held at the University of Leeds.

He has been involved in the electronic editing of skaldic poetry since 1997, when he was employed to develop an electronic version of Bragi Boddason's _Ragnarsdrápa_ for Margaret Clunies Ross. 'An electronic editing process offers great challenges and possibilities for the skaldic corpus, because of both the scope and difficulty of the material,' he says. 'The main advantages lie in the ability to include a great deal of parallel information and the ability to manipulate the complex structures found in skaldic verse for analysis or searchability. The biggest challenge, however, is not a technical one. It is the problem of making the most of the traditional editing skills of the contributors, who nevertheless have had little experience in electronic editing, while at the same time making the most of the technology, which often involves rethinking the editorial process.' Tarrin also produced his PhD thesis electronically, which forms the basis of both the submitted print copy and a web site at [http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/~tarwills/thesis/](http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/~tarwills/thesis/).

For his next project, Tarrin plans to write a history of the study of runes, from the thirteenth century to the present day. He finds the popular but bizarre and spurious theories about runes that are found to this day as interesting as the advances made in the discipline. He will be discussing his thoughts on this subject on Thursday 13 June 2002, when he presents 'A Brief History of Runes' in the Woolley Common Room N480 (see Semester 1 Lecture Series, above).
Travel and Learning

For those who aren't considering a beach holiday may we draw your attention to the Study Tour Programme being offered through the Centre for Continuing Education. Amongst the many interesting tours listed, there is one of particular interest to members of the Centre for Medieval Studies. In January 2003 Dr Nick Eckstein will be leading a three-week study tour to Florence, with excursions to nearby towns and villages such as Fiesole and San Gimignano. It should be noted that this study tour may be used for credit in undergraduate History Studies. For further information please contact the Centre for Continuing Education on 02 9351 2907, or view details and itineraries on the web site www.usyd.edu.au/cce Please do not contact the Centre for Medieval Studies about this study tour.

The Centre for Medieval Studies
John Woolley Building, A20,
University of Sydney, 2006.